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RUEHKH/AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM 0241
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RUEHNM/AMEMBASSY NIAMEY 2711
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SUBJECT: CHAD: POLITICAL OPPOSITION TO TAKE FRANCE TO TASK

REF: NDJAMENA 826

Classified By: POL/ECON OFFICER MICHAEL P. ZORICK, REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D).

SUMMARY:

¶1. (C) Chad's political opposition intends to tell the visiting French Minister-Delegate for Cooperation that she should see President Deby's initiative for political dialogue as they see it: a red herring designed to tell the international community what it wants to hear. That said, the opposition is engaged in its own efforts at conforming to the desires of outsiders. Their proposals for dialogue were designed to confirm to what they think the AU, EU and USG will support, and not necessarily as a viable approach to resolving Chad's domestic political crisis. END SUMMARY

THE DOCTOR MUST TALK
TO THE PATIENT

¶2. (C) Pol/Econ Officer met June 14 with Salibou Garba, head of the National Alliance for Democracy and Development Party (AND) and member of the opposition umbrella group Coordination of the Political Parties for the Defense of the Constitution (CPDC). Garba gave us a confidential preview of the CPDC's letter to France's Minister Delegate for Cooperation and Francophony, Brigitte Girardin, who is visiting Chad June 15-16.

¶3. (C) The CPDC letter repeated much of the crisis analysis that had filled a good part of the group's recent draft proposals for dialogue that Garba had passed to us June 8 (reftel). It contained none of the proposals -- Garba said those were for USG eyes, as the CPDC's direct response to AF DAS Yamamoto. The letter differs significantly in tone as well, calling on France, as an "international partner who seems to want to come to Chad's sick-bed", to understand that

"therapies concocted without first knowing the patient often lead to fatal and tragic consequences, from which comes the necessity of listening to the patient, and learning where he is sick."

14. (C) The CPDC letter stresses that political dialogue must be non-exclusive -- CPDC code-word for including in some fashion Chad's armed opposition. It calls for any such dialogue to be "god-fathered" by the international community, and to be prepared under the aegis of the African Union, given that the AU's Peace and Security Council had declared itself seized with the Chadian crisis at its 49th session.

15. (C) The CPDC written submission to Minister-Delegate Girardin closes with a reference to conducting politics as usual with a president the group considers illegitimate. The letter asks the rhetorical question, "Can we accept the idea that in politics, the lie can be institutionalized? For our part, realism must not mean validating the false and cleansing the filthy." It warns the Minister not to be fooled by the call for political dialogue emanating from the Presidency only one week before Girardin's arrival in Chad, calling it a red herring of the same sort as the memorandum on electoral transparency which the President signed just before the February 2004 visit of France's then-Foreign Minister de Villepin.

DIALOGUE A LA CPDC

16. (C) Pol/Econ Off followed up with Garba on the draft

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proposals contained in the CPDC's "Note for the Attention of Mr. Donald Yamamoto -- Political Crisis in Chad -- Framework for a Resolution". To the question of just how realistic the CPDC's suggestions were, Garba stated that this was the CPDC's attempt to design an approach and structure that responded to what the group perceived to be ideas that the AU, EU, and USG could support. Garba noted that various international community members had proposed a strong Prime Minister from the opposition; to get there, the CPDC thought it would require changes to the constitution, and fencing in the President, as suggested in the draft proposals. He reminded us that the international community's suggestions were similar to the structures developed in the 1993 National Conference in Chad -- and which President Deby had dismantled within only a year.

17. (C) We questioned whether Garba or his CPDC colleagues thought that it was sufficient to have international backing to operationalize an approach to pursue results that bore striking similarities to those that had been sought, and not achieved in the past. Garba noted that there was no chance of success in any dialogue without full support from strong foreign partners to back the President into a corner. He did not, however, believe that this would guarantee success, and in fact implied that Deby might be past influencing, and would only cede or leave power if forced.

COMMENT

18. (C) It would appear that both the political opposition and the Presidency are playing "Please the Foreigners" with their proposals of political dialogue. As long as Deby fills the newspapers with regular announcements of dialogue-planning activities, and the parties in the MPS alliance declare themselves willing to engage, there will appear to be a process in train to which the international community will have to react. The CPDC will point out that Deby's process has no sanity check in it -- the international community will be kept at arms distance. They will call for outsiders to organize, finance, facilitate, and ultimately impose change

on the President -- a level of engagement in Chadian affairs that is unlikely to be quickly forthcoming. The two groups are set to continue talking past each other. Meanwhile, the men with guns sit to the East and South. END COMMENT.

19. (U) Tripoli Minimize Considered.
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